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GREAT POWERS SHOW CAUTION IN UN DEBATE ON PALESTINE

SINCE its opening meeting at Flushing Meadow on April 28, the Palestine special session of the United Nations General Assembly has made appreciable progress toward a limited objective. Most of the fifty-five delegations seek not to "solve" the problems of the Holy Land at this time, but only to appoint an investigating commission to make recommendations to the regular September session of the Assembly. The first week of debate, however, was slowed by protracted discussions of two preliminary issues: the desire of the Arabs to settle the dispute at once by establishing an independent Palestine, and the appeal of the Jewish Agency for representation in the Assembly deliberations.

ARAB OBJECTIVES. These two questions were discussed at length in the powerful fourteen-member General Committee which recommends the agenda and procedure for the full Assembly, and again in the plenary meetings of the Assembly itself where the final decision is made on votes taken in the General Committee. The United States delegation led opposition to the Arab request to place the issue of Palestine independence before the Assembly. Soviet delegate Gromyko told the General Committee on April 29 that his government favored inclusion of the independence issue on the agenda, with the understanding that this step would not commit the special session to decide the problem. Egypt, leading member of the Arab League and sole Arab representative on the General Committee, vigorously upheld the Arab position, while Dr. Oswaldo Aranha of Brazil, president of the Assembly and chairman of its General Committee, struggled to keep the delegates on the subject under discussion. When the vote was finally taken at 11:15 P.M. on April 30, after a parliamentary wrangle lasting nearly seven hours, the General Committee rejected the Arab request by 8 to 1, with 5 abstentions. Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia,

India and Brazil abstained, while Egypt alone voted yes. Arab efforts to persuade the General Assembly on the following day to overrule the General Committee were unsuccessful, the vote on this occasion being 24 to 15 with 10 abstentions.

THE JEWISH APPEAL. The second preliminary issue—the Jewish appeal for representation—took a surprising turn when it was learned on the night of May 1 that the United States had decided on a change of policy. Previously the American delegation had hoped to limit discussion to the procedure of establishing an investigating commission. However, United States delegate Warren Austin told the General Committee on May 2 that "unfortunately, during the discussions which have thus far taken place on matters of procedural character, a considerable number of statements of a substantive character have been introduced." As a result, Mr. Austin went on to say, the Arab case had been heard, but the Jewish case had not. He therefore suggested that the Jewish Agency for Palestine be given a hearing, not by the Assembly but by the Assembly's fifty-five-member first committee, the Political and Security Committee. This American reversal resulted in part from strong pressure brought to bear on the United States government by Zionist organizations. Moreover the Arabs, by maneuvering to get their views before the Assembly, unintentionally strengthened the Jewish Agency's appeal for the right to present its arguments.

The Jewish Agency, however, sought a hearing before the plenary session of the Assembly rather than the Political and Security Committee. This Jewish aim was supported chiefly by Russia, Poland and Czechoslovakia, but was voted down both in the General Committee and the full Assembly. On May 5 the latter body adopted a resolution granting the Jewish Agency a hearing before the Political and

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Security Committee and, in effect, making possible a similar presentation of views by the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine.

BIG THREE CAUTION. One of the most interesting developments of the week was the cautious evolution of policy by those great powers which consider their national interests at stake in the explosive Middle East. Scrupulous care was taken by the Big Three to avoid indications of favoritism to either Arabs or Jews. The Soviet Union supported both the Arab request to place the independence question on the Assembly agenda and the Jewish appeal for a voice in the plenary meetings of the Assembly. The United States at first opposed both pleas, but gave partial support to the Jewish demand after the Arabs succeeded in presenting many of their arguments. Britain moved with equal discretion. When Mr. Austin proposed to the General Committee that the Jewish Agency be heard by the Political and Security Committee, Sir Alexander Cadogan of the United Kingdom—evidently with the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine in mind—suggested an amendment, which was accepted, to allow other organizations to present their views. But none of the Big Three gave any indication of its ideas for an ultimate solution of the Jewish-Arab conflict.

CAN U.S. AND U.S.S.R. ATTAIN EQUILIBRIUM OF POWER?

Secretary Marshall's report to the nation on the Moscow Conference, taken in conjunction with the April 29 statement of his Republican adviser, John Foster Dulles, and the publication on May 4 of former Governor Stassen's interview with Stalin, should help to set Russo-American relations in a more realistic perspective than that recently offered in some sectors of the American press. None of the three documents gives support to those who, yielding to hysteria, had argued that, since conflict between the United States and Russia appeared inevitable, this country should end the present tension by dropping atomic bombs on the U.S.S.R.

WHAT KIND OF COMPROMISE? In all post-mortems on the Moscow Conference the phrase "compromise" recurs with marked persistence. Secretary Marshall reported that in his interview of April 15 with Stalin, the Russian Generalissimo declared compromises were possible "after people had exhausted themselves in dispute." On this point Marshall bluntly commented that, in a Europe that is sinking, "action cannot await compromise through exhaustion." He also said that the issues at stake in Moscow involved principles on which he could not compromise. In canvassing the same problem with Stassen, Stalin distinguished between the "possibility of cooperating" which, he stated, "always exists," and "the wish to cooperate" which, he contends, Nazi Germany did not display toward Russia but Russia has with respect to the United States.

From the point of view of American negotiators

Reports from Palestine reveal skepticism among Jews and confidence among Arabs as to the results of UN deliberations. Since twenty-five international conferences and twelve commissions of inquiry have failed to solve the Palestine problem during the past quarter of a century, the appointment of still another investigating commission can hardly inspire great optimism. Confidence in the effectiveness of the proposed commission has also been somewhat undermined by a statement made on April 23 by Viscount Hall, First Lord of the Admiralty, to the effect that the British government would not carry out a decision of the General Assembly which it did not approve. Sir Alexander Cadogan on April 29 explained this British attitude by telling the General Committee that his government would accept the Assembly's decision but would not carry it out alone.

In spite of all difficulties the presentation of the Palestine issue to the UN General Assembly marks a step forward. It is significant that the discussions are committing most of the nations of the world to take some position on what is admittedly a world problem. Moreover, the committee of inquiry to be constituted by the Assembly will have the prestige of being the first truly international commission to tackle the issue.

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the snag in this discussion about the possibility of "compromise" is that, in their opinion, the United States has so far done all the compromising, and Russia, as seen from Washington, has shown a rigidly intransigent spirit. The record of the Big Three wartime conferences—at Teheran, Moscow and Yalta—reveals beyond doubt that the United States and Britain made concessions to Russia in Europe and Asia which were at that time, rightly or wrongly, regarded by the Western Allies as necessary either to keep Russia in the war against Germany or to bring it actively into the war against Japan. That these concessions may have involved military miscalculations on the part of the Western powers (most notably with respect to the duration of war in the Far East) is now a matter for historical debate. As Moscow sees it, the United States and Britain, since V-E Day, have become increasingly uncompromising about some of their wartime compromises. Russia, for its part, as seen from Washington and London, has shown no desire to retreat from the advanced positions—territorial and political—which it has gained as a result of a war which severely drained its manpower and material resources.

If in the future "compromise" is defined as a decision by either the United States or Russia to abandon their respective systems, then there is little hope of a settlement. For post-war experience has only strengthened the faith of Americans in the virtues of political democracy and, at least, relatively free enterprise as opposed to any form of totalitarian-

ism; and has not visibly shaken the faith of the Russian leaders in the desirability of their ideas and practices as applied in the U.S.S.R. Where compromise must be sought, and may be expected, is not in the field of ideologies, but in the field sometimes scathingly described as "power politics." The only two great powers left in the wake of war are now at a point where an equilibrium of forces may become practicable. Such an equilibrium, which to be effective would have to be world-wide, would require acceptance by both the United States and Russia of some features, at least, of the post-war *status quo*.

This *status quo* which, to give only a few examples, finds Russia checked at the Dardanelles and in Iran, Germany and Austria divided among the Allies, and the United States in occupation of Japan and the southern part of Korea while Russia occupies the northern part, is certainly not ideal from the point of view of abstract justice, nor is it wholly satisfactory to either the United States or Russia. Yet within the framework of these war-made arrangements bargaining may prove possible between the two great powers. Such bargaining will prove more tolerable to the rest of the world if both the United States and Russia can learn to subordinate their interests in increasing measure to the judgment of other peoples in the United Nations.

RUSSIAN AND AMERICAN PROPAGANDA.

In his statement on the Moscow Conference, however, John Foster Dulles expressed the view that Soviet policy "depends little on getting results by diplomatic negotiation," and much on propaganda and infiltration in other countries. That the Soviet government, from its earliest days, has relied heavily on propaganda as a weapon of diplomacy has always been an open secret. This weapon, however, is also available to the United States for the communication of our ideas to other nations. It seems all the more short-sighted, therefore, that Congress should so far have refused to approve funds for continuance of the State Department's broadcasting program, "The Voice of America." It should be borne in mind, however, that Russian propaganda has proved most effective in countries whose economic and social conditions have made people susceptible to Communist promises. Unless the United States succeeds in using such loans or gifts as it may make to improve these conditions, in Greece or elsewhere, American counter-propaganda will of itself prove no check to Communist ideas. Again it seems short-sighted that the cut made by the House in foreign relief appropriations will particularly affect countries now vulnerable to Communist propaganda.

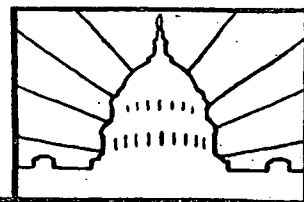
WAR AND DEPRESSION. Perhaps most sig-

nificant of all for an appraisal of Russo-American relations at this critical stage are two points made by Stalin in his conversation with Stassen. First, he mentioned the relative security of the United States, "protected by two oceans," commenting that this country's freedom from major wars in the last century "was a great help to the rapid development of the United States." From the Soviet point of view, this security constitutes an immensely important advantage, since Russia's own economic development during the past quarter of a century has been overshadowed and distorted by the heritage of one world war and the anticipation of a second one. Whatever other objectives the Soviet leaders may have in mind, they are eager right now to have a prolonged period of peace for the reconstruction and development of Russia's economy.

Second, Stalin displayed lively interest in the possibility of a depression in the United States, which has undoubtedly played an important part in Moscow's post-war calculations. Stalin was obviously interested in Stassen's assertion that American businessmen would regulate capitalism in such a way as to avoid a depression—a point on which the Generalissimo expressed some skepticism. But Stalin himself asserted that the disappearance of Germany and Japan as competitors for world markets creates "favorable conditions for American development"—although he neglected the problem of facilitating dollar exchange, promptly pointed out by Stassen. To take advantage of these favorable conditions, however, the United States will have to develop a much broader view of its role as the principal creditor nation in the world than has so far been indicated by Congress or the White House.

The sharp attack delivered by *Izvestia* on May 5 against Secretary Marshall, which appears to contradict the "wish to cooperate" voiced by Stalin, registers both Russia's disappointment with the results of the Moscow Conference, and the hitherto persistent Soviet thesis that Russia is threatened by "monopoly capitalism." Some observers have come to believe that the Russian leaders, who during the war had to depart from this basic thesis to the extent of accepting aid from capitalist nations against Germany, are finding it increasingly difficult to reconcile dogma with some, at least, of the realities of international life. Yet abandonment of the dogma would represent a retreat that would also confront the Soviet government with great difficulties. A hint of the dilemma that may be facing the Kremlin was given by Stalin when he said to Stassen that "Marx and Engels . . . were unable to foresee what would happen forty years after their death." V. M. DEAN

Washington News Letter



HOW WILL FRENCH CRISIS AFFECT RELATIONS WITH U.S.?

The attainment of closer cooperation with France was hailed by John Foster Dulles on April 29 as one of the significant gains the United States made at the Moscow Conference. "Franco-American relations have been bedeviled for several years by a succession of irritations," Mr. Dulles observed, but "at Moscow, we cleared away much misunderstanding." Washington observers agree that Secretary Marshall and his advisers at Moscow may have reassured Paris about its fears of German resurgence and acknowledged France's desperate need for more coal from the Ruhr and Saar. Many of them, however, believe it is decidedly premature to speak of a Franco-American rapprochement as one of the fruits of the recent meeting of the Big Four.

PACT FAILS TO SATISFY NEEDS. In the first place, these observers point out, the highly-publicized agreement which France, the United States and Britain reached at Moscow on April 21 concerning the distribution of German coal fails to give the French any immediate relief from their coal famine. According to the terms of this arrangement, coal exports from the three western zones of Germany to all the liberated countries will be increased from the present figure of 17 per cent to 21 per cent of the daily output as soon as production reaches 280,000 tons a day and to 25 per cent when it rises to 370,000 tons. On paper these provisions offer France and the other liberated nations more German coal than the European Coal Commission has been allotted to them but, in fact, the Ruhr mines are now producing only half their pre-war average. Hence the new arrangements will have no practical effects until there is considerable recovery in German output. Meanwhile the French will continue to receive only approximately 125,000 tons of coal per month from both the Ruhr and the Saar, and they will be obliged to purchase nearly 1,000,000 tons a month from the United States. The French find this continued dependence on American coal extremely disquieting, for the current delivery price of coal from the United States is \$22 per ton, as compared with \$12 per ton for German coal. As a result an unexpectedly large portion of the \$650,000,000 credit former Prime Minister Blum negotiated in Washington just a year ago has been spent on coal.

OUTLOOK FOR U.S. AID UNCERTAIN. The rapid depletion of the French loan raises the question whether the United States would be willing to ex-

tend additional aid to the French government in the event of an economic crisis in the near future. If Mr. Dulles is correct in his belief that closer Franco-American ties were formed at Moscow, Congress might be expected to give favorable consideration to French economic needs. Judging, however, by the drastic cut in the foreign relief bill from \$350,000,000 to \$200,000,000 which the House of Representatives made on April 30, it is henceforth going to be extremely difficult for the Administration to secure Congressional approval for any expenditures abroad, unless they are proposed as a contribution to the "stop-Russia" campaign implicit in the Truman doctrine. If this is the case the French may find it politically impossible to apply for an American loan, since the Communist party is not only numerically the largest party in France but also controls organized labor.

COMMUNIST OPPOSITION TO U.S. An equally important reason why it seems too early to assert that Secretary Marshall succeeded at Moscow in reaching a basic understanding with France is the marked instability of the French government. Although the present cabinet crisis, in which Prime Minister Ramadier on May 4 obtained a vote of confidence in the National Assembly, was precipitated by the Communists' refusal to adhere to the government's policy of freezing wages until July, issues of colonial and foreign policy were also involved: Jacques Duclos, the Communist floor leader in parliament, clearly revealed the opposition of the extreme Left to Foreign Minister Bidault's policy of greater cooperation with the United States on May 2 when he bitterly attacked the United States as the champion of "international reaction." In the same vein other Communist spokesmen have severely criticized M. Bidault for the coal agreement he reached with the United States and Britain, on the ground that the pact marks the first step toward the fusion of all three western zones of Germany and points toward the creation of an anti-Soviet bloc. The immediate question is whether a Centrist government headed by Socialists, such as has emerged from last week's crisis, will find it possible to maintain itself in power and reach a workable agreement with the United States.

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Promised Land, by Ellen Thorbecke. New York, Harper, 1947. \$3.50

A short graphic history of Palestine and its people, its rebirth and future, illustrated with many beautiful photographs and drawings.